

Harm

To disclose any details of West Midlands Police software, applications and providers, would identify vulnerable computer systems and processes which in turn would put knowledge about what software is used within the force and how, into the public domain. This would have a huge impact on the effective delivery of operational law enforcement as it would leave forces open to cyber-attacks and hacking which could render computer devices obsolete.

Public Interest Test**Factors favouring disclosure (S31)**

Disclosure of information relevant to this request would lead to a better-informed public which may encourage individuals to provide intelligence in order to reduce the risk of police networks being hacked.

Factors against disclosure (S31)

Disclosing information about the software and applications used shows that West Midlands Police take their responsibility to protect information and information systems from unauthorised access, destruction, etc., dismissively and inappropriately.

West Midlands Police is only as strong as the weakest link in our supply chain. Hostile actors may infiltrate one of our suppliers and use them to gain access to West Midlands Police systems.

Balancing Test

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. As part of that policing purpose, information is gathered which can be highly sensitive relating to high profile investigative activity.

Weakening the mechanisms used to monitor any type of criminal activity, and specifically terrorist activity would place the security of the country at an increased level of danger.

In order to comply with statutory requirements and to meet NPCC expectation of the Police Service with regard to the management of information security a national policy approved by the College of Policing titled National Policing Community Security Policy has been put in place. This policy has been constructed to ensure the delivery of core operational policing by providing appropriate and consistent protection for the information assets of member organisations.

Anything that places that confidence at risk, no matter how generic, would undermine any trust or confidence individuals have in the Police Service. Therefore, at this moment in time, it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test favours non-disclosure.